

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2559,
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AP-
PROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, in response to questions on why I was one of five Members to vote against the conference report on H.R. 2259, the Military Construction Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2004, I prepared the following statement: I voted against yesterday's conference report because it fails to include a vital project important to our national security on the Northern Border at the Niagara Air Reserve Station in Niagara Falls, New York.

Shortly after being elected to represent part of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station in Niagara Falls, New York, I visited the base. I have become familiar with the service it provides not only to our community, but also to the nation. Most recently, I visited for the base for the happy occasion of the 914^b Airlift Wing's homecoming from deployment. The Air Force Reserve has even publicized the contributions of the base by showcasing the decision of 1st Lieutenant Chris Pfeil, Jr. and Staff Sergeant Tim McNelis, both from the 914th Airlift Wing, to follow their fathers' careers in the military. I ask unanimous consent that this article on their service be inserted in the RECORD. Other units stationed in Niagara Falls that are defending the home front and serving overseas are the 107th Air Refueling Wing and soldiers with the 865th Combat Support Hospital.

I have worked tirelessly with local officials, as well as my counterparts in the Senate, to secure the necessary funding to construct a facility at the base. Unfortunately, it appears that this project, rated the top priority by Niagara County officials, was not included in the final bill for the third year in a row. The fact that this funding was included in an earlier version of the bill, and then stripped out at the last minute during backroom maneuvers which sent the money to another part of New York State, is an insult to our democratic process. It seems that only bases represented by Members on the committee were funded. This is a disservice to the military facility in my district and bases throughout the country. It is a disservice to the men and women in uniform from the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station who have been deployed to serve their country in Iraq.

I could not, in good conscience, support this conference report. There is no doubt in my mind that the soldiers, not to mention the citizens in Niagara Falls, deserve better than what this bill provided. I want to assure the courageous servicepeople at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station that I am already preparing for the next opportunity to remedy this situation.

[From afreserve.com, June 17, 2003]

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON IN SOUTHWEST ASIA
(By Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith)

SOUTHWEST ASIA—The decision to follow their fathers into the military wasn't a difficult one for 1st Lt. Chris Pfeil Jr. and Staff Sgt. Tim McNelis, both from the 914th Airlift Wing, Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, NY.

"I was introduced to it very young," said Chris Jr., a C-130 pilot with the 772nd Expeditionary Airlift Squadron. "So joining the military was always something I kept in the back of my mind."

Pfeil said his father, Senior Master Sgt. Chris Pfeil Sr., a C-130 loadmaster also assigned to the 772nd EAS, never pressured him but set an example for him to follow.

"It had to be his decision," said Chris Sr., "and it was important to support him in whatever he chose to do."

"I've always wanted to fly, and this was the best decision," Chris Jr. said, "but he never pushed it."

For Tim, a C-130 crew chief assigned to the 320th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, it was his father's advice against joining another branch of the service that encouraged him to try the Air Force Reserve Command.

"He wanted to join the Marines at first and then he talked about the Army," said Senior Master Sgt. Jerry McNelis, a C-130 loadmaster with the 772nd EAS, "but I talked him out of it."

Tim said he's happy with the decision he made to join the Reserve because it allowed him to continue with school, and two years ago he was hired as a full-time air reserve technician.

He also is happy he's had the opportunity to deploy with his father in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

"It's good to have a family member here," Tim said. "You always have someone to talk to."

Knowing that his father will be flying on one of his aircraft also makes him want to go that extra step.

"It gives me the incentive to work that much harder knowing my dad is on my plane," he said.

For the Pfeils, being deployed here together has given both of them peace of mind.

"Any parent or child is going to be concerned," said Chris Sr., "but when Chris goes on a mission, chances are I was there the day before so I know the environment and what he can expect and that helps."

Having each other to lean on during this deployment has been a benefit for both father/son teams, and for the fathers it's an opportunity to see their children follow that much closer in their footsteps.

TRIBUTE TO AL HEILMAN

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 6, 2003

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated and selfless individual on the eve of his retirement from public service, Kalamazoo's Al Heilman. Since 1968, Al has served with great distinction the citizens of Kalamazoo in a number of capacities—from being first elected to the County Board in 1968 to having served as City Commissioner since 1995.

Many words come to mind as one reflects upon Al Heilman's public service to our community. He is selfless, generous, giving, caring, humble . . . the list goes on. Al is widely known for his extensive charitable gestures, often giving both money and time to local individuals, businesses, universities, and the community as a whole. There is no question that Al's dedication and contributions to the city will be missed.

Now, Al can "retire" to pleasing folks with his other trade—as owner and operator of

Heilman's Nuts and Confections. As a member of the business community, Al Heilman will continue to be a part of our everyday lives.

Our community is in debt to Al Heilman for his continued public service since 1968. I wish him and his family all the best as he departs public service. Al's contributions to our community have been many, and we are all better off from his service. For those that know him, his name alone helps define public service. All those that have met him, like him. All those that know him, love him.

TRIBUTE TO GTR OF GASSAWAY,
WEST VIRGINIA

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 6, 2003

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of GTR of Gassaway, West Virginia, for being awarded a 2003 Export Achievement Certificate in recognition of an increased focus on exporting.

The Export Achievement Certificate was created to recognize small and medium-sized enterprises that have successfully entered the international marketplace for the first time or that have successfully entered a new market.

As our economy continues to become more global, it is important for industries of all types to develop relationships and ties in the international community. As the West Virginia economy diversifies, GTR has taken major steps forward to promote the Mountain State and all it has to offer to the world economy.

By making strides to expand opportunities, GTR has in turn brought benefits to the state that will be felt far beyond the business itself. I applaud GTR for its efforts and look forward to seeing continued success.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognition of GTR, and I offer them as an example to small and medium sized enterprises everywhere.

IRVING FRADKIN'S CONTINUED
WORK FOR EXPANDED EDU-
CATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 6, 2003

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, from time to time I have used this medium to share with my colleagues the important work being done by the Citizen's Scholarship Foundation of Fall River, Massachusetts, the organization created and run—with the help of many, many others in increasing numbers—by Dr. Irving Fradkin.

I do so not simply to give well deserved recognition to the tireless efforts of Dr. Fradkin on behalf of young people who might not get to benefit from a college education without his work, but more importantly to give an example to others of what can be done in this regard. Of course it is important that we in the Congress continue to provide public funds to help provide the equality of opportunity to higher education, which we all want to be a part of the American experience. A sufficient level of